

Application No. 09/671,804
Amendment dated November 25, 2003
Reply to Office action of September 8, 2003

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1 (withdrawn): A method of providing customers with marking stamps of the self-inker type comprising the steps of:

- a) inputting type data to a computer; and
- b) under computer control, using a laser engraver to engrave a blank die mounted on the platen of a single self-inker type marking stamp, whereby a stamp can be finished in about five minutes.

Claim 2 (withdrawn): The method of claim 1 wherein, in step a, said type data is input to said computer from remote locations.

Claim 3 (withdrawn): The method of claim 2 wherein, in step a, said type data is input via the Internet.

Claim 4 (withdrawn): The method of claim 1 wherein, in step a, said type data is input to said computer by a customer in a point-of-sale location whereby the customer can receive a finished stamp in about five minutes.

Claim 5 (withdrawn): The method of claim 4, further comprising, after step a, the step of printing an index card whereby the customer can check the accuracy of the type data before step b is carried out.

Claim 6 (withdrawn): The method of claim 1 wherein said laser engraver comprises:

- a) a laser translatable in a vertical direction;
- b) a stamp holder carriage translatable in a horizontal direction; and
- c) a controller connected to said computer.

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Claim 7 (withdrawn): The method of claim 6 wherein said stamp holder carriage translator is adapted from an inkjet printer mechanism.

Claim 8 (withdrawn): The method of claim 1 wherein said laser engraver comprises a prior art commercial laser engraver having in addition a multiple cavity fixture adapted to hold finished stamp mounts.

Claim 9 (withdrawn): The method of claim 8 wherein said multiple cavity fixture further comprises sensors disposed to indicate the presence and size of stamp mounts in each cavity.

Claim 10 (withdrawn): The method of claim 9 wherein said sensors are laser sensors whereby a laser scan over said fixture can determine a distribution of mounts and their sizes in said fixture.

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Claim 11 (twice amended): A method of providing customers with marking stamps of the self-inker type comprising the steps of:

- a) inputting type data to a computer;
 - b) printing at least one photonegative and placing it optically adjacent to a single die cavity and forming a liquid-tight planar boundary for said cavity;
 - c) filling at least one single die cavity with a light curable photopolymer;
 - d) exposing said photopolymer through said photonegative to form a marking die;
- and

e) removing said marking die from said cavity and placing it on the platen of a self-inker stamp body,

whereby a stamp can be finished in about five minutes.

Claim 12 (original): The method of claim 11 wherein, in step a, said type data is input to said computer over the Internet.

Claim 13 (original): The method of claim 11 wherein, in step a, said type data is input to said computer by a customer in a point-of-sale location whereby the customer can receive a finished stamp in about five minutes.

Claim 14 (original): The method of claim 13, further comprising, after step a, the step of printing an index card whereby the customer can check the accuracy of the type data before step b is carried out.

Claim 15 (currently amended): The method of claim 11 wherein, in step b, at least two identical of said photonegatives are produced and superimposed to create a denser photonegative.

Claim 16 (original): The method of claim 11 wherein, in step b, non-identical photonegatives are printed and placed in separate single die cavities.

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Claim 17 (original): The method of claim 11 further comprising the additional step, after step d, of pressing said marking die onto absorbent material to absorb uncured polymer.

Claim 18 (original): The method of claim 11 wherein, in step e, an adhesive is used to cement said die to said platen.

Claim 19 (previously amended): The method of claim 11 wherein said single die cavity is formed with a non-UV-transmitting disposable cavity plate.

Claim 20 (original): The method of claim 19 wherein said disposable cavity plate comprises cardboard.

Claim 21 (new): The method of claim 11 further comprising, during step b, the step of inserting a transparent film between said photonegative and said single die cavity.

Claim 22 (new): The method of claim 21 wherein in step c, said filling of said cavity is accomplished by injecting said photopolymer through a hole in the side of said cavity and driving air out a substantially opposite hole with said photopolymer.

Claim 23 (new): The method of claim 22 wherein, in step d, said photopolymer in said cavity is additionally exposed through a planar side opposite said photonegative side.

Claim 24 (new): The method of claim 11 wherein in step c, said filling of said cavity is accomplished by injecting said photopolymer through a hole in the side of said cavity and driving air out a substantially opposite hole with said photopolymer.

Claim 25 (new): The method of claim 24 wherein, in step d, said photopolymer in said cavity is additionally exposed through a planar side opposite said photonegative.

Claim 26 (new): The method of claim 11 wherein, in step d, said photopolymer in said cavity is additionally exposed through a planar side opposite said photonegative side.